

**STUDENT WELLBEING AND
ENGAGEMENT POLICY**

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school on 5581 1588

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

1. our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
2. expectations for positive student behaviour
3. support available to students and families
4. our school’s policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Casterton Secondary College is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture, where student participation is encouraged and valued, helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

The objective of this policy is to support our school to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our school’s values.

**Scope**

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

**Contents**

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations and management
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

**Policy**

1. **School profile**

The College opened on its present site in 1955 and is nestled in a picturesque valley surrounded by rolling red gum hills. The Glenelg River meanders through the township. Casterton is 353km. west of Melbourne and is approximately 70 km. from Hamilton and Mt. Gambier. Casterton Secondary College services the needs and provides opportunities for the people of Strathdownie, Dergholm, Coleraine, Merino and Casterton.

**Social**

Casterton Secondary College is a single campus, Year 7 - 12 school. The 2024 enrolment is expected to be approximately 110 students. Our students come predominantly from rural or related backgrounds; there are low levels of students born overseas and very few students of Koori background.

We currently have 13 teaching staff (including the Principal Class), with part-time staff this equates to 12 effective fulltime positions. There are 10 non-teaching staff including Integration Aides and we have a school nurse.

**Educational**

Students at Years 7 to 10 study a core curriculum of English, Maths, Humanities, Science, PE/Health, Science, Agriculture/Horticulture, Technologies and Art.

Students benefit from the educational experiences on the adjacent 16-hectare school farm and applied learning in the Applied Science Centre; including aquaculture, viticulture and oenology programs. The school’s units of work can be sourced from our website [www.**casterton**sc.vic.edu.au](http://www.castertonsc.vic.edu.au)

The College makes every effort to provide a broad range of choices at VCE level. In addition to a large offering of VCE subjects, a VCE-VM program also operates. Additionally, we have an SBA and SWL student stream.

The College offers a wide range of extension and enrichment programs including an instrumental music program and sport. Students participate in a range of competitions including subject competitions.

**Technological**

The College has two rooms of computers and a ratio of one computer to one student which includes a combination of three trolleys of netbooks, i-pads and desk top computers. The school Intranet provides storage and pick up facilities for all students and staff. Wireless connectivity enables all staff to access the network and the internet from anywhere in the school. Smart Televisions are installed in all classrooms. The school links remotely with other schools for subjects at year 11 and 12.

**Environmental- grounds and facilities**

The College grounds are extensive and well maintained providing an inviting environment to the College community and visitors. Sporting facilities include a multipurpose stadium, two ovals, a covered passive recreation area and cricket nets.

Students also have access to outdoor gym equipment (five stations) as part of a walking trail.

State-of-the arts technology facilities and equipment (including a drone, plasma cutter etc.) supports students to study a wide range of subjects including Product Design Technology in Wood and Metal and Food Technology.

The music centre allows students to gain one on one, and small group instruction in a range of instruments.

1. **School philosophy, vision and values**

**Philosophy**

Casterton Secondary College’s moral purpose is to prepare students to contend with a very dynamic 21st century in which creativity, cooperative work, connectedness to the world and adaptability are key features. The school aspires to provide a contemporary approach to teaching and learning in its purposeful learning environment.

The school values of respect, accountability and persistence sit at the centre of our work and complement the school’s belief in high expectations of all students and a commitment to hard work.

The programs of, and teaching in, the school will support and promote the principles and practices of Australian democracy including a commitment to:

* An elected government.
* The rule of law.
* Equal rights for all before the law.
* Freedom of religion.
* Freedom of speech and association.
* The values of openness and tolerance.

Statements which affirm the school’s principles and values are found on the school website, in the vision of the school and in policies.

**Vision**

Our school’s vision is to achieve the best academic outcomes for all students, with a focus on promoting responsibility for the acquisition of skills, knowledge and positive personal qualities through a dynamic learning environment that engages students and prepares them for their future.

**Values**

**Respect** – for self, consideration for others, consideration for the environment, consideration for other’s views and cultural differences and empathy

**Accountability –** taking responsibility for all our actions, learning and decisions.

**Persistence –** Pursuing excellence through focus and concentration, curiosity, tenacity and endurance. – Underpins internal motivation and life- long learning.

**Mantra**

High Expectations – No Excuses

1. **Wellbeing and engagement strategies**

Casterton Secondary College has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We acknowledge that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.

A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:*:*

*Universal*

* high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
* prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
* creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive
* welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
* analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
* deliver a broad curriculum including VET programs, VCE, VCE-VM and VPC to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
* teachers at Casterton Secondary College use the school’s Instructional Model and associated frameworks to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction that is evidenced-based, and incorporates high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
* teachers at Casterton Secondary College adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching
* our school’s Statement of Values are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community
* carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
* positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
* monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
* students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through Student Voice and other forums including PLC staff and School Council meetings. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Sub-School Leaders, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns
* all students are welcome to self-refer to the School Nurse, Sub-School Leaders, Assistant Principal and the Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind. We are proud to have an ‘open door’ policy where students and staff are partners in learning
* we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes Restorative Practices
* assist with the development of a positive self-image
* encourage a positive attitude towards involvement in community affairs and acceptance of a responsible role as a member of society in the peer group, the local community, the Australian community, and the global community
* provide opportunity for students to develop their academic, social and physical potential (i.e. sports teams, clubs, and recess/lunchtime activities).
* expose the students to the range of ethical, moral, cultural and social values and standards of society.
* regularly unpack the school values of Respect, Accountability and Persistence.

*Targeted*

* each year group has a Sub-School Leader responsible for their year, who monitor the health and wellbeing of those students, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
* all students from Year 7-12 engage in a careers program and develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future
* connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
* all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
* Casterton Secondary College assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by the Careers Coordinator
* relevant staff will undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year
* staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma

*Individual*

Casterton Secondary College implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

* building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances
* meeting with student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
* developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
* considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up
* referring the student to:
	+ school-based wellbeing supports
	+ Student Support Services
	+ Appropriate external supports such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst
	+ Re-engagement programs such as Navigator

Where necessary the school will support the student’s family to engage by:

* being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student’s circumstances and health and wellbeing
* collaborating, where appropriate and with the support of the student and their family, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student
* monitoring individual student attendance and developing Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family
* running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
	+ with a disability
	+ in Out of Home Care
	+ and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring
1. **Identifying students in need of support**

*Casterton Secondary College is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Leadership Team and the Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Casterton Secondary College will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:*

* *personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled*
* *attendance records*
* *academic performance*
* *observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation*
* *attendance, detention and suspension data*
* *engagement with families*
* *self-referrals or referrals from peers*
* *PAT testing*
* *NAPLAN data*
* *Panorama Staying in Education Platform: students at Risk*
1. **Student rights and responsibilities**

All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity. Our school’s Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to:

* participate fully in their education
* feel safe, secure and happy at school
* learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, racism, discrimination or intimidation
* express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

Students have the responsibility to:

* participate fully in their educational program
* display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
* respect the right of others to learn.

Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to speak to their parents or carers and approach the relevant sub school leader, a member of the school leadership team, or a trusted teacher. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints Policy.

1. **Student behavioural expectations**

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school’s Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Casterton Secondary College’s Bullying Prevention Policy and Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedures

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Casterton Secondary College will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department’s Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student’s behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary measures at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

* warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
* teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
* withdrawal of privileges
* referral to the relevant Sub-School Leader
* restorative practices
* detentions
* behaviour reviews
* suspension
* expulsion
* removal / suspension from work placements

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at: http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx

***Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance.***

Suspension, expulsion and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

* <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy>
* <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>
* <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy>

In line with Ministerial Order 1125, no student aged 8 or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

The Principal of Casterton Secondary College is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

Corporal punishment is prohibited by law and will not be used in any circumstance at our school.

1. **Engaging with families**

Casterton Secondary College values the input of parents and carers, and we will strive to support families to engage in their child’s learning and build their capacity as active learners. We aim to be partners in learning with parents and carers in our school community.

We work hard to create successful partnerships with parents and carers by:

* ensuring that all parents have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
* maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff
* providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
* involving families with curriculum-related activities
* involving families in school decision making
* coordinating resources and services from the community for families
* including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students
1. **Evaluation**

Casterton Secondary College will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by our students so that we can measure the success or otherwise of our school based strategies and identify emerging trends or needs.

Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:

* student survey data
* incidents data
* school reports
* parent opinion survey
* student attitudes to school survey
* case management
* CASES21, including attendance and absence data
* Panorama Staying in Education Platform: students at Risk
* SOCS

Casterton Secondary College will also regularly monitor available data dashboards to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible.

**COMMUNICATION**

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways

* Available publicly on our school’s website
* Included in staff induction processes
* Included in transition and enrolment packs
* Included in student diaries so that it is easily accessible to parents, carers and students
* Included as annual reference in school newsletter
* Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carer notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Department’s policies at:

* [Suspension process](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/guidance/1-suspension-process)
* [Expulsions - Decision](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/guidance/decision)

**Further information and resources**

The following Department of Education and Training policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

* [Attendance](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/attendance/policy)
* [Student Engagement](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-engagement/policy)
* [Child Safe Standards](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/child-safe-standards/policy)
* [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/supporting-students-out-home-care/policy)
* [Students with Disability](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/students-disability/policy)
* [LGBTIQ Student Support](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/lgbtiq-student-support/policy)
* [Behaviour - Students](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/behaviour-students/policy)
* [Suspensions](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy)
* [Expulsions](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy)
* [Restraint and Seclusion](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy)

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

* Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
* Bullying Prevention Policy
* Inclusion and Diversity Policy
* Statement of Values and School Philosophy

## **POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

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| Policy last reviewed | Term 3, 2023 |
| Consultation | Endorsed by School Council 14/08/2023 |
| Approved by | Principal  |
| Next scheduled review date | 2024 |